IMAGE PROCESSING APPARATUS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to an image processing apparatus for preventing the forgery of bills, etc. in a recording system for processing an image in a host computer and printing the image on a recording device.

Related Background Art

Many systems for preventing the forgery of bills, valuable securities, etc. are designed as input/output device built-in systems such as copying units, etc. However, with an increasing number of personal computers, high-performance peripheral devices such as a scanner, a digital camera, a printer, etc. have been developed. As a result, with these high-performance peripheral devices, the personal computers can output an image at a quality level higher than an image output by the input/output device built-in copying units. Thus, in a personal computer environment, a forgery preventing system is required.

As a characteristic of a forgery preventing system in the personal computer environment, a host computer controls input and output devices. Therefore, it is necessary to allow an image process program of the host computer to recognize specified patterns of bills, valuable securities, etc. A personal computer can

output data without a specific image process program only if it is informed of the control code of the output device.

Accordingly, a method of encrypting the control code of the output device is effective to prevent the use of a program other than the specific image process program for a forgery preventing process. The above mentioned method is disclosed by, for example, by Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 6-105141 although not in the personal computer environment. FIG. 2 shows an example when this method is applied to the personal computer environment.

In FIG. 2, the processes in steps S2001 to S2005 are performed by the host computer, and the processes in steps S2006 to S2009 are performed by the recording device.

In the first step S2001, image data is input from an OS (basic software) or an application. Then, in step S2002, an image process including a forgery preventing process is performed. The image process in step S2002 includes color matching, gamma correction, and quantizing processes to convert an input image into print image data. In the forgery preventing process in step S2002, determination is normally made on a specified image by performing a pattern recognizing process. If the input image matches the specified image, then an error process is performed on the image

data.

Then, the print data on which an image process has been performed is encrypted in step S2003. The encrypted print data is converted into print control data as a command for control of a printer in step S2004.

The print control data as a command is transferred to the printer by controlling (control can be practically performed by the OS) the data transfer circuit (not shown in the attached drawings) in step S2005.

Next, in step S2006, the printer receives the print control data. A command analyzing process is performed on the received print control data in step S2007, and encrypted print image data is generated.

Then, the encrypted print image data is converted into print data in a decryption process in step S2008, and the decrypted print data is printed on a storage medium in step S2009.

However, since in the above mentioned system which performs the encryption process between the host computer and the printer, there is an one to one correspondence between the input image and the data transferred to the printer, the encrypted data can be easily decrypted.

That is, it is the same as the case where the control code of the printer used in the conventional

system is not open, and there is a problem that the image forgery preventing process cannot be effectively performed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to solve the above mentioned problems, and provide an improved image processing apparatus and method.

Another object of the present invention is to provide an image processing apparatus and method capable of effectively performing a forgery preventing process on an input image.

A further object of the present invention is to provide an image processing apparatus and method by hardening the decryption of a forgery preventing process.

A further object of the present invention is to provide an image processing apparatus and method capable of effectively preventing a print process performed by a number of unspecified image recording devices by encrypting print control data for controlling an image recording device using a common key issued by an image recording device when the image recording device is allowed to print an image, and by disabling any other image recording devices than the image recording device by which the common key has been generated to record the image.

Further objects of the present invention will be clearly described by the following explanation based on the attached drawings and the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a flowchart of the procedure of the operations of the recording system according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a flowchart of the procedure of the encryption process according to the recording system of the conventional technology;

FIG. 3 is a flowchart of the procedure of an encryption process according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 4 is a flowchart of the procedure of a decryption process according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 5 is a flowchart of the procedure of an encryption table generating process according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 6 is a flowchart of the procedure of a decryption table generating process according to the first embodiment of the present invention; and

FIG. 7 is a block diagram of an example of the configuration of the image data recording system realizing the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

(First Embodiment)

The embodiments of the present invention are described below in detail by referring to the attached drawings.

FIG. 1 is a flowchart of the procedure of processing data in the recording system according to the present invention.

In FIG. 1, the processes in steps S1001 to S1004 and steps S1009 to S1012 are performed by a host computer. The processes in steps S1005 to S1008 and steps S1013 to S1017 are performed by s recording device.

In the first step S1001, image data is input. Then, in step S1002, an image process including a forgery preventing process is performed.

Next, in step S1003, a print ID is generated, and then the print ID is transferred to a recording device in step S1004.

Next, in step S1005, the recording device receives a print ID, and stores the received print ID in step S1006.

Next, in step S1007, a common key is generated. At this time, the recording device is managed such that a print ID is paired with a common key.

If a common key is generated in step S1007, it is irregularly generated such that the common key cannot

be associated with the value of the print ID.

Then, in step S1008, the generated common key is transmitted to the host computer.

The common key transmitted from the recording device is received by the host computer in step S1009. Thus, since the recording device issues the common key in response to the transfer of the print ID of the host computer, the transfer of the print ID in step S1004 indicates a request to issue a common key.

In step S1010, the print image data generated in the process performed in step S1002 is encrypted by the common key received in step S1009.

Then, in step S1011, the encrypted print image data is converted into a print control command. Then, in step S1012, the print ID and the print control data command are transferred to the recording device side.

In step S1013, the recording device receives a print ID and print control data. Then, in step S1014, the common key corresponding to the received print ID is retrieved and obtained from a managed pair of the print ID and the common key. Then, in step S1015, the command of the print control data is analyzed, and the encrypted print image data is extracted.

Then, in step S1016, the print image data is decrypted using the common key obtained in step S1014. In step S1017, the print image data is stored on the storage medium in the print process.

The print data transferring process in steps S1012 and S1013 and the process in steps S1015 to S1017 can be sequentially repeated in parallel. Although not shown in FIG. 1, the used print ID and the common key paired therewith may be discarded after performing the print process in step S1017.

FIG. 3 is a flowchart of the contents of the encryption process performed in step S1010.

The random number table according to this embodiment comprises series of irregularly arranged integers (1-byte length each) of "0" to "255". That is, the table size is 256 bytes. The common key is formed by integers from 0 to 255.

First, in step S3001, a random number table is stored on the memory (RAM) of the host computer. Then, in step S3002, the random number table on the memory (RAM) is converted into an encryption table using a common key.

In step S3003, the print image data is encrypted using the generated encryption table. In this case, the print image data is sequentially read in a byte unit, the data value of one read byte is set as an offset from the leading address of the encryption table, and the value of the corresponding address is set as the encryption print image data.

FIG. 5 is a flowchart of the process performed in step S3002.

First, in step S5000, the process is started. then, in step S5001, a variable n is set to "0". The variable n is a management counter for 100 times repetition of the processes in steps S5003 to S5005 described later.

Then, in step S5002, the value of the common key is assigned to a variable B. Then, in step S5003, a variable A is computed using the variable B by the following Equation (1). 'mod' is a well-known function for use in obtaining a residue in a division.

$$A = (5 \times B + 13) \bmod 256 \quad \ldots (1)$$

Next, in step S5004, the variable B is computed using the variable A by the following Equation (2).

$$B = (5 \times A + 13) \bmod 256 \quad \ldots (2)$$

In the computation by the Equations (1) and (2), pseudo random numbers are generated in a linear congruential method. That is, the common key is used for the initial value in the linear congruential method.

Then, in step S5005, the table value whose offset from the leading address of the random number table stored in the memory in step S3001 is A and the table value whose offset is B are interchanged. Then, in step S5006, n is incremented by 1.

It is determined in step S5007 whether or not n is "100". If it is "100", then control is passed to step S5008, and the converting operation terminates. If it

is determined in step S5007 that n is not 100, control is passed to step S5003.

FIG. 4 is a flowchart explaining the procedure of the decryption process performed in step S1016. The random number table used in this embodiment is the same table as that used in the process in step S3001.

First, in step S4001, the random number table is developed on the memory (RAM) of the recording device.

Then, in step S4002, the random number table on the memory (RAM) is converted into a decryption table using a common key. In the obtained decryption table, the offset value from the leading address of the series and the integer stored at the address can be obtained by interchanging the values on the above mentioned encryption table.

For example, when the 25th value from the start of the encryption table is "12", the 12th value from the start of the decryption table is "25" (assume that the start of the table is set to 0).

That is, the encryption table is an inverse conversion table of the decryption table. Assuming that a function A( ) indicates the conversion using the encryption table and a function B( ) indicates the conversion using the decryption table, the following Equations exist.

$a = A\ (d),\ d = B\ (a)$

Then, the encryption print image data is decrypted

using the generated decryption table in step S4003. In step S4003, the encryption print image data is sequentially read in a byte unit. The read 1-byte data value is an offset from the leading address of the encryption table, and the value of the corresponding address is the print image data.

FIG. 6 is a flowchart of the process in step S4002.

In FIG. 6, the processes in steps S6000 to S6007 are the same as the converting operation in steps S5000 to S6007 on the encryption table. After generating the encryption table, the address value and the table value are interchanged in step S6008 for conversion into the decryption table.

The following Tables 1, 2, and 3 are the tables used or generated in this embodiment.

Table 1

Random Number Table

x	R(x)	x	R(x)	x	R(x)	x	R(x)	x	R(x)	x	R(x)	x	R(x)	x	R(x)
0	88	32	184	64	24	96	120	128	216	160	56	192	152	224	248
1	197	33	165	65	133	97	101	129	69	161	37	193	5	225	229
2	230	34	70	66	166	98	6	130	102	162	198	194	38	226	134
3	139	35	107	67	75	99	43	131	11	163	235	195	203	227	171
4	196	36	36	68	132	100	228	132	68	164	164	196	4	228	100
5	225	37	193	69	161	101	129	133	97	165	65	197	33	229	1
6	114	38	210	70	50	102	146	134	242	166	82	198	178	230	18
7	71	39	39	71	7	103	231	135	199	167	167	199	135	231	103
8	112	40	208	72	48	104	144	136	240	168	80	200	176	232	16
9	61	41	29	73	253	105	221	137	189	169	157	201	125	233	93
10	62	42	158	74	254	106	94	138	190	170	30	202	126	234	222
11	67	43	35	75	3	107	227	139	195	171	163	203	131	235	99
12	92	44	188	76	28	108	124	140	220	172	60	204	156	236	252
13	217	45	185	77	153	109	121	141	89	173	57	205	25	237	249
14	74	46	170	78	10	110	106	142	202	174	42	206	138	238	234
15	127	47	95	79	63	111	31	143	255	175	223	207	191	239	159
16	136	48	232	80	72	112	168	144	8	176	104	208	200	240	40
17	181	49	149	81	117	113	85	145	53	177	21	209	245	241	213
18	150	50	246	82	86	114	182	146	22	178	118	210	214	242	54
19	251	51	219	83	187	115	155	147	123	179	91	211	59	243	27
20	244	52	84	84	180	116	20	148	116	180	212	212	52	244	148
21	209	53	177	85	145	117	113	149	81	181	49	213	17	245	241
22	34	54	130	86	226	118	66	150	162	182	2	214	98	246	194
23	183	55	151	87	119	119	87	151	55	183	23	215	247	247	215
24	160	56	0	88	98	120	192	152	32	184	128	216	224	248	64
25	45	57	13	89	237	121	205	153	173	185	141	217	109	249	77
26	238	58	78	90	174	122	14	154	110	186	206	218	46	250	142
27	179	59	147	91	115	123	83	155	51	187	19	219	243	251	211
28	140	60	236	92	76	124	172	156	12	188	108	220	204	252	44
29	201	61	169	93	137	125	105	157	73	189	41	221	9	253	233
30	250	62	90	94	186	126	26	158	122	190	218	222	58	254	154
31	239	63	207	95	175	127	143	159	111	191	79	223	47	255	15

Table 2

Encryption Table

x	A(x)	x	A(x)	x	A(x)	x	A(x)	x	A(x)	x	A(x)	x	A(x)	x	A(x)
0	217	32	57	64	24	96	249	128	89	160	56	192	25	224	121
1	197	33	196	65	164	97	132	129	100	161	68	193	36	225	229
2	183	34	70	66	119	98	215	130	55	162	151	194	38	226	87
3	154	35	122	67	75	99	43	131	26	163	250	195	218	227	186
4	165	36	5	68	101	100	228	132	37	164	133	196	4	228	69
5	32	37	0	69	224	101	192	133	160	165	128	197	33	229	64
6	35	38	131	70	227	102	67	134	242	166	3	198	99	230	18
7	246	39	214	71	7	103	231	135	118	167	86	199	54	231	22
8	177	40	208	72	113	104	209	136	240	168	145	200	241	232	81
9	156	41	124	73	92	105	60	137	28	169	252	201	220	233	93
10	207	42	47	74	254	106	239	138	79	170	175	202	15	234	222
11	146	43	114	75	82	107	50	139	195	171	163	203	210	235	178
12	253	44	188	76	189	108	29	140	125	172	221	204	61	236	157
13	88	45	185	77	153	109	248	141	216	173	184	205	152	237	120
14	187	46	27	78	123	110	219	142	202	174	155	206	251	238	91
15	127	47	78	79	46	111	14	143	238	175	206	207	174	239	142
16	136	48	233	80	73	112	168	144	9	176	105	208	201	240	41
17	84	49	52	81	20	113	244	145	212	177	180	209	245	241	213
18	150	50	71	82	167	114	182	146	103	178	199	210	39	242	135
19	138	51	106	83	74	115	42	147	10	179	234	211	59	243	170
20	85	52	181	84	21	116	117	148	116	180	53	212	149	244	148
21	144	53	112	85	80	117	48	149	16	181	49	213	17	245	176
22	83	54	130	86	19	118	115	150	162	182	51	214	147	246	243
23	230	55	198	87	166	119	134	151	102	183	23	215	247	247	6
24	97	56	193	88	96	120	129	152	225	184	65	216	161	248	1
25	12	57	236	89	204	121	172	153	140	185	108	217	109	249	77
26	255	58	95	90	191	122	31	154	110	186	223	218	63	250	159
27	179	59	98	91	66	123	34	155	2	187	226	219	194	251	211
28	173	60	13	92	76	124	205	156	45	188	141	220	237	252	44
29	200	61	169	93	137	125	104	157	72	189	40	221	8	253	232
30	235	62	90	94	171	126	11	158	107	190	203	222	58	254	139
31	94	63	62	95	30	127	143	159	111	191	190	223	158	255	126

Table 3

Decryption Table

x	B(x)	x	B(x)	x	B(x)	x	B(x)	x	B(x)	x	B(x)	x	B(x)	x	B(x)
0	37	32	5	64	229	96	88	128	165	160	133	192	101	224	69
1	248	33	197	65	184	97	24	129	120	161	216	193	56	225	152
2	155	34	123	66	91	98	59	130	54	162	150	194	219	226	187
3	166	35	6	67	102	99	198	131	38	163	171	195	139	227	70
4	196	36	193	68	161	100	129	132	97	164	65	196	33	228	100
5	36	37	132	69	228	101	68	133	164	165	4	197	1	229	225
6	247	38	194	70	34	102	151	134	119	166	87	198	55	230	23
7	71	39	210	71	50	103	146	135	242	167	82	199	178	231	103
8	221	40	189	72	157	104	125	136	16	168	112	200	29	232	253
9	144	41	240	73	80	105	176	137	93	169	61	201	208	233	48
10	147	42	115	74	83	106	51	138	19	170	243	202	142	234	179
11	126	43	99	75	67	107	158	139	254	171	94	203	190	235	30
12	25	44	252	76	92	108	185	140	153	172	121	204	89	236	57
13	60	45	156	77	249	109	217	141	188	173	28	205	124	237	220
14	111	46	79	78	47	110	154	142	239	174	207	206	175	238	143
15	202	47	42	79	138	111	159	143	127	175	170	207	10	239	106
16	149	48	117	80	85	112	53	144	21	176	245	208	40	240	136
17	213	49	181	81	232	113	72	145	168	177	8	209	104	241	200
18	230	50	107	82	75	114	43	146	11	178	235	210	203	242	134
19	86	51	182	83	22	115	118	147	214	179	27	211	251	243	246
20	81	52	49	84	17	116	148	148	244	180	177	212	145	244	113
21	84	53	180	85	20	117	116	149	212	181	52	213	241	245	209
22	231	54	199	86	167	118	135	150	18	182	114	214	39	246	7
23	183	55	130	87	226	119	66	151	162	183	2	215	98	247	215
24	64	56	160	88	13	120	237	152	205	184	173	216	141	248	109
25	192	57	32	89	128	121	224	153	77	185	45	217	0	249	96
26	131	58	222	90	62	122	35	154	3	186	227	218	195	250	163
27	46	59	211	91	238	123	78	155	174	187	14	219	110	251	206
28	137	60	105	92	73	124	41	156	9	188	44	220	201	252	169
29	108	61	204	93	233	125	140	157	236	189	76	221	172	253	12
30	95	62	63	94	31	126	255	158	223	190	191	222	234	254	74
31	122	63	218	95	58	127	15	159	250	191	90	223	186	255	26

The above mentioned Table 1 is an example of the random number table according to this embodiment. The Table 2 is an encryption table when the common key is "15" in this embodiment. The Table 3 is a decryption table when the common key is "15" in this embodiment.

In the above mentioned embodiment, the encryption process and the decryption process are performed by the conversion system using the tables. This system requires a smaller load in performing an operation, thereby preventing the printing speed from being reduced.

Furthermore, according to this embodiment, the recording device manages both print ID and common key. Therefore, when the recording device is connected to a plurality of host computers, the print process can be performed in the transfer order of print control data regardless of the common key issue order.

(Other Embodiments)

In the above mentioned embodiments, an encryption table is generated by converting a random number table using a common key, but the encryption table can be the common key. Furthermore, the common key can be used as a parameter in the congruential method, and an encryption table can be generated by generating pseudo random numbers.

The encryption table may be generated by conversion using the common key according to not only

the congruential method but also an average method. Since a common key of a specified value can be issued in the above mentioned embodiments, the value of an internal timer of the recording device can be used.

An example of the configuration of the image data recording system embodying the present invention is described below by referring to the block diagram shown in FIG. 7.

In FIG. 7, reference numeral 70 denotes an image data processing device; reference numeral 71 denotes an interface; reference numeral 72 denotes an image processing unit; reference numeral 73 denotes a print ID generating unit; reference numeral 74 denotes a print ID storage unit; reference numeral 75 denotes a first transfer unit; reference numeral 76 denotes an encryption unit; reference numeral 77 denotes a print control data generating unit; and reference numeral 78 denotes a second transfer unit.

Furthermore, reference numeral 80 denotes an image data recording device; reference numeral 81 denotes an interface; reference numeral 82 denotes a common key generating unit; reference numeral 83 denotes a management unit; reference numeral 84 denotes a common key issue unit; reference numeral 85 denotes a common key obtaining unit; reference numeral 86 denotes an analyzing unit; reference numeral 87 denotes a decryption unit; and reference numeral 88 denotes a

print unit.

As shown in FIG. 7, the image data recording system comprises the image data processing device 70 and the image data recording device 80. Through the interface 71 and the interface 81 respectively provided in the image data processing device 70 and the image data recording device 80, various data and commands are transmitted and received to print the image data input to the image data processing device 70 on the image data recording device 80, and then output.

In FIG. 7, the image processing unit 72 performs the image process including the forgery preventing process on the input image data. The print ID generating unit 73 generates a print ID corresponding to the image data processed by the image processing unit 72 in the forgery preventing process. The generated print ID is stored in the print ID storage unit 74, and transferred by the first transfer unit 75 to the image data recording device 80.

The encryption unit 76 encrypts the image data processed by the image processing unit 72 in the predetermined processes using the common key transmitted from the image data recording device 80. The print control data generating unit 77 generates print control data by converting the print image data encrypted by the encryption unit 76 into a print control command. Then, the generated print control

data and the print ID generated by the print ID generating unit 73 and stored in the print ID storage unit 74 are transferred by the second transfer unit 78 to the image data recording device 80.

The common key generating unit 82 generates a common key based on the print ID transferred from the image data processing device 70. Then, the generated common key and the transferred print ID are stored and managed in the memory of the management unit 83.

The common key issue unit 84 transmits the common key generated by the common key generating unit 82 to the image data processing device 70. When the print ID and the print control data are transmitted from the image data processing device 70, the common key obtaining unit 85 obtains a common key corresponding to the print ID from the management unit 83.

The analyzing unit 86 analyzes the command of the above mentioned print data using the common key obtained by the common key obtaining unit 85, and extracts the encrypted print image data. The decryption unit 87 decrypts the print image data extracted by the analyzing unit 86 using the common key obtained by the common key obtaining unit 85. Then, the decrypted print image data is stored in a storage medium (not shown in the attached drawings) by the print unit 88.

(Other Embodiments according to the Present Invention)

The present invention can be applied to either a system comprising a plurality of appliances (for example, a host computer, an interface appliance, a leader, a printer, etc.) or a device comprising one appliance.

In addition, the present invention further includes an embodiment in which a program code of software for realizing the functions of the above mentioned embodiments are provided for the computer in the device or the system connected to each of the above mentioned devices so that various devices can be operated to realize the functions of the above mentioned embodiments, and the above mentioned devices are operated according to the program stored in the computer (CPU or MPU) of the system or the device.

In this case, the program code of the software realizes the functions of the above mentioned embodiment, and the program code itself and the unit for providing the program code for the computer, for example, a storage medium storing the program code constitute the present invention. The storage medium storing the program code can be, for example, a floppy disk, a hard disk, an optical disk, a magneto-optical disk, CD-ROM, a magnetic tape, a non-volatile memory card, ROM, etc.

In addition, it is needless to say that the

program code is included in the embodiment of the present invention not only in the case where the function described in the above description of the embodiment is realized by a computer executing the program code provided thereto, but also in the case the function is realized by the program code cooperating with the OS (operating system) or other application software operating in the computer.

Furthermore, after the provided program code is stored in the memory in a function extension board of a computer or a function extension unit connected to the computer, the CPU, etc. provided in the function extension board or the function extension unit can perform all or part of an actual process at an instruction of the program code to realize the function of the above mentioned embodiment in the process. The present invention can also include the above mentioned case.

As described above, the print control data is encrypted using a common key issued by an image data recording device. Therefore, when the image data processing device generates a recording image by controlling the image data recording device, the image data recording device which has issued the common key is required, thereby effectively preventing a number of unspecified image data recording devices from printing image data, and ensuring that the forgery preventing

process is performed by the image data processing device. Thus, the forgery of bills, valuable securities, etc. can be prevented without fail.